

**MINUTES OF THE  
COASTAL REGIONAL COMMISSION COUNCIL  
September 11, 2013  
Richmond Hill City Center, Richmond Hill, GA  
10:00 A.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Jim Thomas called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. A moment of silence was held for 9/11. Invocation was provided by Vice Chairman Jason Coley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jimmy Burnsed, Reggie Loper, Chris Blaine, Sean Register, Allen Brown, Walter Gibson, Herb Jones, Shaw McVeigh, William Miller, Craig Root, Jim Thomas, Herb Hill, Matthew Barrow, Julie Martin, Harold Fowler, Willis Keene, Edna Jackson, Chap Bennett, Tom Ratcliffe, Dan Coty, Margaret Evans, Kelly Spratt, Joe Brannen, and Jason Coley.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Donald Lovette, Linda Barker, Hugh Hodge, David Boland, Gwendolyn Davis, William Boyd, Bill Deloughy, Ken Lee, Robert Long, Russell Keen, Mary Hunt and Al Scott.

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dorothy Glisson, Screven County; Clarence Knight, Kingsland; Ron Elliott, Fort Stewart.

**GUESTS:** Jeff Morris, USACE; Frank Parker, Statesboro; Wally Orrell, McIntosh IDA; Mike Vaquer, CAT; Duncan Ross, Prosser Hallock; Patrick Graham, CHA; Jennifer Fordham, DCA; Rebecca McGee and Commissioner Mark Butler, GDOL; Allison Segrest, GA Forestry Commission; Jackie Teel, Chatham MPC; Tina Hutcheson, DCA; Joe Parker, Jr., News Media; and Clark Byron, Coastal Empire News.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Allen Burns, Executive Director; Lena Geiger, Finance Director; Lupita McClenning, Planning and Government Services Director; Don Masisak, Transportation Director; Lauren Robesky, Economic Development Director, and Colletta Harper, Administrative Services Director.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chairman Thomas requested approval of the minutes from the August 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Motion:** Mayor Margaret Evans  
**Second:** Herb Jones  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Transportation Changes** – *(See attachment 1, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Mr. Don Masisak, Transportation Director referred members to the tan handout and explained the DOT procedural format that will be used for route/fare changes. CRC staff will be meeting with current TPOs to identify possible changes that will help increase efficiency and cut costs. Possible changes including reducing the number of days for the Tybee Shuttle and reducing the number of days for shopping trips from one county to another. Once any recommendations have been studied and decided that it would benefit the program, changes will be brought to the council for approval, and then public hearings will be held. Currently looking at restarting the vanpool program; the 5311 program allows for a 30-minute window which is not conducive for workers getting to work on time. After a brief discussion, it was decided that financial statements will be included in the monthly Transportation Dept. status report.

**Approval of Planning Team Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee:** *(See attachment 2, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Ms. Lupita McClenning, Planning and Government Services director referred members to the handout that explained the process for the development of a regional Hazard Mitigation

Plan. In partnership with the University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design, students are assisting the CRC in providing research, performing technical analyses and identifying strategies by which the CRC can integrate hazard mitigation in the Regional Plan and ultimately into local planning. This will be comprised of all the coastal region's county commission chairmen. A FEMA Planning Handbook and a Memorandum of Agreement were provided to the Chairmen present. A motion was made to approve the Committee.

**Motion:** Mayor Harold Fowler

**Second:** Sean Register

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Approval of Regional Broadband Planning Team** – *(See attachment 3, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Ms. McClenning referred members to the handout and explained the Digital Economy Plan that will be developed over the next 15 months with funding from National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) within the Department of Commerce. Funds have been provided to each of the regional commissions. Handbooks will be provided to the planning team next month. A motion was made to approve the Planning Team as presented.

**Motion:** Chris Blaine

**Second:** William Miller

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Discussion on holding Council meetings in alternate locations:** Chairman Thomas stated he would like to discuss the possibility of different counties hosting the CRC meeting. A brief discussion ensued regarding potential loss of participation by members who could not take off additional time from work to travel further, the sunshine law does not allow for conference calls, you could call in; however, you would not be counted in the quorum and could not vote, in-person meetings are preferred. After a show of hands, 9 were interested in alternate meeting locations and 10 wanted to keep it at the City Center. It was decided to keep the same meeting location; and, if an opportunity presented itself, have a meeting at a different location once a year. Chairman Thomas stated that he had invited the new Major General from Fort Stewart to the October meeting; Mr. Ron Elliott confirmed that the invitation had been accepted that morning by the General.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

**Georgia Dept. of Labor** – *(See Attachment 4, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* GDOL Commissioner Mark Butler provided an update on the happenings with DOL. Highlights from his presentation: The DOL serves as a conduit between businesses and colleges and technical schools. Through Job Expos, it became apparent that a lot of people lack "soft skills". In response, the DOL developed a Special Workforce Assistant Team (SWAT) that works with job seekers prior to an Expo to instruct them on the proper way to dress, interview, prepare a resume, social media ethics, etc. The DOL also has a Business Ethics Student Training (BEST) program that they started in 20 high schools and the local business community. Through word of mouth, this program is now in 190 schools. The healthcare reform is having a very negative impact on businesses, they are not able to expand and are having to turn away work; restaurants are making many employees part-time. October 17<sup>th</sup> DOL will be hosting "Paychecks for Patriots" hiring event in Savannah, Warner Robbins, Columbus, Atlanta and Augusta. The SWAT will also be working with them two weeks prior to the event.

**Georgia Forestry Commission** – *(See Attachments 5, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Ms. Allison Segrest, Communications Specialist/Government Liaison presented a PowerPoint Presentation on the Georgia Forestry Commission's five-year strategic plan and services provided by the Commission. The GA Statewide Forest Resources Assessment and the Forest Resources Strategy were produced in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill. The assessment provides a science-based foundation that analyzes forest conditions and

trends, and defines priority rural and urban forest landscape areas. The Strategy addresses the top eight priority issues identified by the assessment and serves as the basis for the five-year plan. For more information go to [www.forestactionplans.org](http://www.forestactionplans.org)

**Digital Implementation Tool of the Regional Plan:** Mr. Duncan Ross, Senior Planner with Prosser Hallock provided a brief overview on the Digital Implementation Tool website. The website was created to monitor the implementation of the Regional Plan originally adopted by the CRC in 2010. CRC staff has entered the results received from the Quality Growth Effectiveness Assessment Survey, sent to all local governments to measure performance standards as they relate to implementation of the Regional Plan. The implementation tool is a database which stores and updates information for the region's 45 jurisdictions and the Plan's 161 Performance Standards which is 7,245 data points. Phase 1 identifies base line info of the region's 10 counties and 35 municipalities. Mr. Ross stated he believed this Digital Implementation Tool is a first of a kind monitoring system for Regional Plans in Georgia. Executive Director Burns stated that the coastal region was the first to complete and adopt a Regional Plan. At that time, DCA had not provided guidelines on how to monitor the implementation of the plan and that this tool is important for the CRC in prioritizing resources and to assist jurisdictions in their QLG status. The CRC will forward a link to all of our local governments once the site is ready to go live.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Update on GARC** – GARC Chairman Clarence Knight reported that the Annual Conference will be held at the King and Prince on November 6-8.

**DRI Reports:** *(See Attachment 6, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Executive Director Burns referred members to the handout regarding DRI #2345, East River Street, Savannah, GA. Recommendations were made for improving the project and the project is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

**Project Status Reports** - *(See Attachments 7, 8, 9, and 10 attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* If anyone has any questions, please see staff after the meeting.

**CADDA Report:** No questions were raised regarding the CADDA report. *(See Attachment 11, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)*

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Audit is currently underway and appears to be going smoothly, as always Lena and her staff does a good job in preparing.
- Transportation Renovations have been completed with the \$300,000 in ARRA funds. DOT is highlighting this as a successful use of ARRA funds to the Governor.
- Met with Gretchen Corbin, the new DCA Commissioner.
- Received a letter of commendation for our Aging Services Director Dionne Lovett from DHS Director James Bulot. Several seniors were displaced by Veranda Properties in Savannah and Dionne and Mayor Edna Jackson and others jumped into action to make sure the seniors were adequately being taken care of.

- Will be attending the State of the Port address in Savannah.
- Unfortunately, federal funding for the dredging of the Brunswick port has been cut in half. Would like the Council to approve staff writing a letter for the Chairman's signature to federal delegation requesting additional funding for the dredging of the Brunswick Port.

**Motion:** Shaw McVeigh

**Second:** Tom Ratcliffe

**Vote:** Unanimous

- Savannah State stepped up to the plate and picked up the State Science Fair Program which allows students in three counties which dropped the program (Glynn, McIntosh & Wayne) to be able to participate. Burns stated he would like permission from the Council to write a letter for the Chairman's signature to the President of the College commending her for her action.

**Motion:** Shaw McVeigh

**Second:** Jason Coley

**Vote:** Unanimous

Mr. Sean Register commented how the council meets and votes on different services provided, but wondered how many members had actually had to use the services of the CRC. Mr. Register stated his mother suffers from dementia and has received great services from Peggy Luukkonen and Dionne and that the CRC has some great employees with "soft skills" in Darien.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m., with lunch following.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be on **Wednesday, October 9, 2013, at the Richmond Hill City Center at 10:00 a.m.**